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NEWS RELEASE

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WATER QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION TO CONSIDER CHANGES TO NEW MEXICO WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will present a proposal to the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) on April 10, 2012 to consider changes to the surface water quality standards for the lower Dry Cimarron River and dozens of New Mexico lakes. The proposed changes are intended to more accurately describe the waters and how they are used by New Mexicans, and provide protections for all users of the waters.

For the lower Dry Cimarron River, NMED proposes to change the aquatic life use designation from “coldwater” to “coolwater” to make the standards better fit naturally-occurring conditions. For lakes, the changes provide new classifications for 62 natural high elevation lakes, reservoirs, and natural sinkholes. The changes will allow for the proper protection of aquatic life and recreation, and improve the ability of the public to identify water quality standards for a particular lake. The lakes included in the proposal are Cabresto Lake, Canjilon Lakes, Fawn Lakes, Hopewell Lake, San Gregorio Lake, Bonito Lake, Monastery Lake, Santa Rosa Reservoir, Cottonwood Lake, Inkwell Lake, Lea Lake, Mirror Lake, Perch Lake, Clayton Lake, Eagle Nest Lake, Shuree Ponds, Springer Lake, Jackson Lake, Quemado Lake, Bill Evans Lake, and 36 high elevation natural lakes in the Sangre de Cristo mountains.

The WQCC’s hearing on the proposal will begin at the conclusion of the WQCC’s regular business meeting that starts on April 10 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol Building. Any member of the public may present non-technical testimony and exhibits at the hearing or submit a written non-technical statement for the record to the WQCC at any time prior to the close of the hearing. To do so, contact:

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NMED's proposal, Public Hearing Notice, Hearing Procedures and Pleading Log can be found on its website at:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/Standards/WQCC-11-05R/index.html>.

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